

Milestone

Jan. 29, 2005

Speaking Out has reached a milestone that none of us could have imagined two and a half years ago. When I started this little rag as the Mayor and others on Andrew St. call it, who would have imagined the readership it would harvest?? As of midnight Jan 28 we have had 41,365 hits on the web site for January. This compared to 26,314 hits for Dec. To Ralph Cipolla and the rest of the nobility at City Center the answer to your question of "Who do these people represent"? It is the 1,477 people who take the time everyday to log onto www.speakingout.biz to stay informed. To Laura Lee and Boss Hog who claims Speaking Out is not an accredited, legitimate publication look at the numbers. Try as they may Council, Mayor and city management have not nor will they ever be able to stifle our voice which is really our readers voice.

Our fund raising for legal expenses continues. We have been offered items for sale as donations and I will start a new page offering these products for sale. I will call the page Fund Raising so please go there and see the items that are available. There will be new and used items and will be identified as such. So for businesses and individuals who want to help us out by donating product or services that we can sell give me a call 327-5717 or email jim@speakingout.biz. Of course CASH donations are also welcome. Make cheques payable to

Citizens Coalition of Orillia and Area

13 Creighton St.

Orillia, Ont. L3V 1A9

Direct Deposit at any TD Canada Trust Branch

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For you business types we will post your ad/business card on our site for a donation of \$100. We will put your ad or card up for one month. Great way to get exposure and help the cause. Make cheques payable to:

Citizens Coalition of Orillia and Area

Any excess funds to our legal needs will be donated to a local charity to be determined. So rest assured your donation will remain here to do good in the community.

Thanks Packet

Jan. 28, 2005

I want to thank the Packet for three items this week. I have criticized the Packet for not reporting the whole story or ignoring stories all together. Well this week we have the Packet doing it's job and I and many others are happy to give them credit.

The Packet in their Wednesday Editorial hit the mark right on. They made it abundantly clear that Councillor Smith's behavior and tone are unacceptable in a democratic society. They called the whole incident a "disturbing display" which it was. I hope that this change in tone will carry on and the Packet pressures council and city management to be honest with us. I hope Packet reporters will no longer just report statements of council and staff without actually checking facts and questioning the legitimacy of their statements. Of course I also hope that the Packet reporter when confronted with these inaccurate statements will get a response from the other side and report it fully. I also hope that the Packet will hold councillors and mayor responsible for their truthlessness. You see the Mayor and Council have made this a them or us fight. Council and management have

circled their wagons and anyone daring to question their judgment, decisions, experts and spending are considered as THEM.

The second congrats is for the CORRECTION on Thursdays Sports Page. You may remember Toby Gorman's article which had INCORRECT statements and facts. So we now have an apology from the Packet not only for the errors but also for taking so long to correct it. Very good start but I for one would like to see Toby who not only wrote the erroneous article but edited it to let us know if he is sorry about it. It would also be handy to know who gave Toby the false information or did Toby just make this stuff up. I don't for a minute believe that the article was an error. The facts used by Toby were so far off base they must have been written and printed on purpose. So how about it Toby?

The third item was Colin McKim's "Council critics kept on short leash". Colin has hit it on the head in his satirical column. Orillia the last four years has taken on the look and feel of "Hazzard County USA". Boss Hog (Ian Brown) runs the council and city from his throne on the third floor. He hides information and documents not only from the serfs like us but from most of the Nobility (council). The power of Boss Hog is undisputable as councillors don't have the gonads to challenge him. Even though most councillors are denied access to information and are treated as Serfs instead of Nobility they still bow at the feet of Boss Hog. Good article Colin keep up the good work. If we want freedom of speech and freedom of the press then our responsibility to Speak Out and challenge lies and corruption is absolutely essential and therefore our duty and obligation.
jim tolnai

Dishonest / Insincere

Jan. 25, 2005

Council Committee meeting last night was very interesting. David Stinson chairman of the EAC gave a report to council asking that his committee be included in the loop. You see these volunteers who give of their own time are appointed by council to look at environmental issues and advise council. Council of course has withheld information regarding the MURF not only to the public but to their own advisers. So rightly EAC asked to be allowed access to reports and documents. As expected Cipolla, Smith, Morano, Gardy disagreed. Cipolla claimed they have been given information and their advice sought. Smith saying that council already received expert advice from Shaheen & Peaker and didn't think that EAC could add further. Morano not wanting to accept their letter as even information because the committee is being reviewed by council and wanted to hear from this review committee first. Of course the four councillors who comprise the review committee haven't even bothered to have even their first meeting didn't seem to matter to him. Gardy as usual was himself.

But the most interesting comments came from Tim Lauer. Tim made a grand gesture in defending EAC's request for access to information and defending the committee. This is typical Tim. Say one thing in public and then act opposite. I will share with you now a prime example of how this guy has been trying to play both sides of this issue but always coming down on the Toxic side. Back in November at the City Open House for the MURF Allan Millard and I had an impromptu meeting with Tim in the hallway. We discussed first the industrial building on Royce Drive and the city's interest in this property. Tim admitted at that time that indeed the city had commercial plans down there and didn't think merchants downtown would mind new competition. We reported this in the Nov. Speaking Out. But of more interest was on the subject of toxins buried on the site and information that I had presented and which was ignored by the engineers and council. You see

common practice was to dispose of 45 gallon drums of paints, metals degreasers and more. Tim stated he did not believe this information and it never took place. At this time I suggested he could check these stories for authenticity and get even more information much easier than we could. You see Tim's father worked at Otaco for 50 years. He was in management and would have first hand knowledge of how this company dealt with disposal of these toxins. Now this was before we had Tom Eagons story of the cribs and drain system that carried toxins to them. With some goading Tim agreed he would ask his father and promised to let us know either way the information went. Now we come to yesterday. I sent an e-mail to Tim a copy of which follows seeing that he has never bothered to contact us with his findings.

"Good morning Tim

Back in November you myself and Allan Millard had a conversation regarding toxins being buried on the MURF site. At that time you indicated that you did not believe the story to be true. I suggested that you should check with your father as he worked for Otaco and would have first hand knowledge. You at that time promised you would speak to him and would let us know once you had an answer either way. Well over two months have passed and we have not heard from you. Have you not spoken to your father as yet? In light of the people coming forward who did work there I would think that you would be anxious to clear the air on this matter. Tim I can assure you no one including your father will be blamed for what happened in the past. That behavior was prevalent in all industries. What people will be held responsible for is their actions today. Trying to cover up these facts of history in order to save face will indeed have repercussions on everyone involved. The Lauer family can do the right thing and add their voice to the growing number of voices who say enough is enough. We mustn't sacrifice the safety of this and future generations because of what our fathers have done and certainly not for the profit of a few individuals. It is time to admit past mistakes and not allow another to be made. We have setup a public meeting for Feb. 4. At that time information will be brought forward that maybe unwanted by you or your family. The Lauers can be seen as the problem or the solution to the problem. Your call Tim. You know how to get in touch.

Jim Tolnai"

Hey! Tim I know I said I would not make this letter public until Feb. 4 but your dishonest reply and your behavior last night left me no choice.

Here is his reply.

"Morning Jim- Thanks for the note- I don't remember stating that I didn't believe the story to be true. I remember saying that we had no factual information at that time to support it. I also remember saying after a fairly lengthy conversation that I would ask the question you were posing at the time- that question being - why doesn't the City do some historical research and go looking for the barrels that according to anecdotal information were routinely dumped on the site. I asked that question shortly after our conversation and was informed that a Geophysical Survey was being proposed by the Engineers for the site and (as I understand it) through the use of magnetic sensors would locate any barrels that may be buried under the ground. I await further details on the method, effectiveness and cost of this Geophysical Survey.- Tim"

First: All of a sudden he doesn't remember not believing the story.
Unbelievable???

Second: There was never any talk of why the city did no historical study. We spoke only of his fathers involvement with the company and having first hand knowledge.

Third: He totally ignored the question of his father and information which I am positive was shared with Tim if indeed he did not already know it.

Fourth: He ignored his promise to let us know either way the information went.

So we come to last night. Here this man sits supporting EAC's right to information on the environmental condition of this site but refusing to share important information with the committee and public. I have no doubt his father informed him and of course his answer to my e-mail does nothing but confirms this fact. Our information from former employees and their families has been that everyone knew or should have known how these toxins were disposed of. Especially management who ordered this practice had knowledge and anyone who claims otherwise is less than honest. This claim then leads me to another question. Seeing that Cipolla worked at the factory would he not also have knowledge of their practices. Is the combined memory of Lauer and Cipolla really that bad?? One can only come to the conclusion that these people just don't care for our children or their community. They want to build on this site at any cost. But why??? Surely it can't be because there are no other sites??? What drives these people to push this site even in the face of overwhelming evidence of Catastrophic pollution???? What drives these people to cover up instead of cleanup????

One last comment on last nights council. For anyone who missed this it is amusing. Someone had asked council to give extra garbage tags to people with medical needs that generated extra garbage. Now that is a very reasonable request and council approved 15 additional tags to these people. What was interesting is Cipolla's grandstanding about his concern of this waste making it's way to the dump. He questioned whether this material might be hazardous. This from a guy who dumped 40,000 tons of contaminated, toxic soil at the very same dump to leach into Lake Simcoe. Then later on another matter relating to a study which would include the viability of Lake Simcoe to take more development Cipolla was concerned that if Lake Couchicing was included he had concerns and wanted the city to take part in the study. If your concerned Ralph then why did you dump 40,000 tons of toxic hazardous material on the shore of Simcoe which feeds Couchicing?????

Jan. 24,2005

I was informed that my source had erred on naming Stevens as being with Gardy and Koughan in

the story below. The third person was actually Cipolla not that it makes much of a difference to the story but it does make a difference to Stevens and we must be fair to report accurately.

MURF Site Prep Work

Jan. 22, 2005

It seems according to Mayor Stevens the MURF site prep work will be completed for the second time within a month. What am I talking about? Well in Dec. the city announced that the preparation work was finished and the next step would be to wait until May for the surcharging and dewatering to take hold. Remember the contract called for a finish of Dec. 30/04 and we were told they completed the work early. The city announced the completion of the work around the 20th of Dec. Now the mayor claims work was not completed. So which story is the truth. Seems these people can't get their stories straight and are shooting from the lip. I have been told by people at city hall that they observed much excitement between Gardy, Cipolla and Koughan. You see they were discussing the latest Speaking Out story with Lori Koughan clutching a printout of the article (and they claim not to read us). Of course we have been writing and questioning the motive for the work startup again. We are convinced that the toxic plume has moved and the digging had something to do with that. We have asked for test results from the monitoring wells and were turned down flat so we must speculate (had tests been favorable it would be released I'm sure). The Mayor and gang decided to do damage control so they issue a press release saying that cold weather had delayed the work. But Ron why did you then claim in Dec. the work was finished? Sorry but with your track record on being truthful we have a hard time believing this spin or quite frankly anything that comes from city hall regarding the MURF. What about all the work performed this week at the site with some of the coldest temperatures this winter. Remember our engineer friend who was amused that these guys were actually working in -30 degrees. He could not understand what the rush was if what Lori Koughan claimed was the truth?? Question: Soil dug up from the footprint was being deposited on the top of the footprint fill. Why did the machine spread the dirt like it was being aerated. Was there samples tested for VOC's on the dirt dug out of the footprint? If so show us the results. If not tested why???

In the same press release Stevens says "Even though we will not break ground until May, the project is certainly gaining momentum within the community". I guess digging up 40,000 tons of dirt is no longer called breaking ground in Stevens speak. So what do you call this digging??? Then not only do they finish the work in Dec. by their own announcement now they claim it was delayed and will finish it again. I don't know about you but the story sure doesn't hold water with me (toxic or clean). The mayor is right that momentum is gaining. Why just this Friday the Orillia Today's Janet Houston wrote about the MURF. Bruce Galway writes in the Packet and a letter to the editor "Mayor criticized" as well as Speaking Out received letters from Colleen Cooney and Jim Hawkins (see we get letters). Now the mayor would have us believe that this momentum is pro MURF **site**. Nothing could be further from the truth. People are finally seeing through the smoke and mirrors and see that the Emperor has no clothes. Lie to me once Mr. Mayor and I believe you it is your fault. Lie to me twice and I believe you it is my fault. Credibility and trust in our leaders is absolutely necessary for successful governing in a democracy. You, council and city management have squandered both.

For anyone who did not see the TV Ontario story last week we have copies of the show on VHS as well as a video of the Coalition public meeting and would be happy to lend them to you. We know you will find them most interesting. If you are still unsure about the site toxicity it's worthwhile

viewing. Call me 327-5717. Also don't forget the Coalition is having a public information meeting Friday Feb. 4 7pm Saturn Room Sundial (Lacile St. entrance)

Citizen Coalition Announcement

Jan. 21, 2005

The Coalition held its first meeting of the New Year last night (for Mel St Onge we had more than 5 people show up). We are now ready to begin our fundraising efforts for legal costs in our challenge to the cities refusal to even consider cleaning the MURF site and make it safe for construction. Now for those few who are attempting to make you believe that the Coalition is against building a MURF **nothing is further from the truth. We are and have always been pro MURF.** What you must realize is that the MURF site is one of if not the worst polluted and toxic site in the world. This is made abundantly clear by Dr. Derek Ford a world renowned Hydrogeologist. Dr. Ford is respected and his opinion and advice is sought by governments, corporations, communities etc. all over the world. Dr. Ford has lent his expertise and professional reputation to you and all of Orillia free of charge because of his concern for our collective safety. He gains nothing except the undeserved abuse for his effort. Take the city solicitor Mike Miller calling him Dr. Crazy. This from a man who's law firm charges the city \$108,000.00 for 1 1/2 days in court and losing (if anyone is crazy it is council for paying this amount). Millers partner's wife Lori Koughan manages the project that is reaping such great rewards for this firm and her family. Seems there is an appearance of conflict of public interest and private interest here isn't there??? Makes one wonder why our taxes are so high doesn't it???

So we are now asking the wider community to help force council to do an Environmental Assessment which by law has to be done and should have been done without a fight. There is no need to spend hundreds of thousands more money on legal fees arguing they do not need to follow the law. But council is determined to fight at any cost to you because they know this site will never pass impartial scrutiny. As the truth comes out we will see why only one site was ever in the running for this MURF. These people think that we collectively are a sad lot and they can pull the wool over our eyes one more time. Just ask yourself who will really benefit from this site being developed. Ask around and find out who is buying up property around the area and what their connections are. All will eventually come out with your help. So whether you are concerned about the cost of building, operation cost or the health and safety of the entire community and beyond you need to get involved. This project is touted as being driven by sports groups. We disagree. Yes sports groups want a MURF as **do we** but what parent or sports group wants their child or member exposed to "Catastrophic" levels of toxins?? Please identify yourselves??? These people are being used by council and staff unknowingly by them I might add as being responsible for the great push for the site, while the truth is they are pushing for a MURF not where it will be located. So ask around and find out why you and I have to build on this site and who will profit. Who is and has been buying property in the area. Who complained to the city about business located in the Royce avenue building and shutting them down leaving the landlord with loss of income and throwing 68 people out of work? Yes the city will say they are only doing their job but these businesses have operated as long as 14 years without inspection. Folks I say in fact the city has not been doing their job for at least 14 years if indeed these businesses were so dangerous that they needed to be shut down. Trent Elyea says he only acted on a complaint and it is unfair to say he is targeting this location. He also says if he was targeting then he would be inspecting the junkyard as well. Why

doesn't he inspect this business then?? No the important thing here is who complained and what is their connection to council and the interested parties shopping for cheap property??

So here is what we are doing. We are going to be holding another public meeting on **Friday Feb. 4, 7pm Sundial Travelodge downstairs Saturn Room entrance off Laclie St.** We would like to extend a personal invitation to any stake holders so that we can share our information. We will have a presentation with a question and answer session and welcome your questions and input. In the mean time we are looking for volunteers to canvas neighborhoods, business etc. for financial help to pay for the legal challenge. We want you to donate whatever you can afford and most importantly talk to people. Inform yourself and challenge council to answer questions and make contracts public. If you are in business you will be getting a call soon asking for some support. One idea we had was to have business advertise on this site. In December we had over 26,000 hits on speakingout.biz. This month we have had 23,307 hits to midnight Jan. 20. So this is a great way for your business to have exposure. We can put your business card in full colour or ad on the site for \$100 per month. Cheques are to be made out to The Citizens Coalition of Orillia. Forward your information and we will upload it. Now you can help and benefit from the exposure. I also own a commercial web-site www.cityclickersorillia.com. We have not marketed this site as yet but for you business people who want to help I will offer ads on this site for the next 60 days and all funds will be for the Citizens Coalition legal fund. Cost is only \$99.95 per year and is actually administered by the advertiser. So go to www.cityclickersorillia.com to check it out. Then give me a call 327-5717. Come on Orillia lets get this controversy ended and get on with building a safe and affordable MURF.

For service clubs, schools and organizations we are offering to do a presentation to your group and students. Our strongest argument is the facts. So if your group or school is interested in the health and welfare of the community, cost of construction and on going operating costs it costs nothing to have us present our case. We also have copies of the TV Ontario show so if you missed it we can lend you a copy. Once you have all the information we are confident you will see that what we are doing is correct, necessary and in the public interest.

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Child Support

Jan. 20, 2005

I was just reading the headline in today's Packet "Indian Act handcuffs single mom". The story claims that status Indians can not be forced to pay any kind of debt including child support unless the person that is owed the money is also a status Indian. Now wait a minute if this is his child then the child is Indian. Let the child sue his father as this money is for the child's benefit. Don't tell me you can't do that either. The fact is the government doesn't want to upset the apple cart and are sacrificing this child. Sickens me and should sicken every decent person. Sherry Lawson can't say if it's a good, bad or ugly law. Well let me tell you natives rail against the Indian Act all the time when it affects them negatively and call it bad law. But as soon as something like having to pay for your responsibility come along they can not make up their mind. If this guy is not man enough to do

the right thing then the band and larger native community should shoulder the responsibility for their own. With financial success comes responsibility. Let's see if they will.

City is Digging Outside the Footprint

Jan. 18, 2005

Just got back from the MURF site. I have been corresponding with a chap who says that he has information that what the city is doing right now is legit. His source has assured him that no problems exist yet he will not identify himself for fear of reprisal. Now I don't get it. Someone defends the city and he is afraid of reprisal???? Anyway I took a quick run up to West St. and wonder of wonders they are now digging on the southside but outside of the building footprint. It's -30 and there are 4 machines working and trucks coming and going. I took some pictures so have a look at them below. Unless the city is building a larger building why are they digging outside of the footprint exactly where Dr. Ford said the plume would flow towards. As you can see clearly they are outside of the footprint.

I was in touch with our engineer friend seeing that we received the information from the unidentified person. Sorry to say our expert is still scratching his head. To him digging and working in -30 degrees makes no sense to begin with. That alone raises the red flag along with the lights for after dark work (our expert had quite a nice laugh at that one). As for having to dig up previously filled foot print but only a part of it raises flags as well. He explained that as surging takes place the new fill is compacted. Tests are taken to make sure that proper compaction took place. This should be done on site and results available within a half hour. You see on an on going project the results are needed immediately before the work progresses too far ahead. Work went from south to north so that the redug area was actually dug and filled first way back in Nov.. Anyway we seem to have a professional standoff. The only difference is I know who our expert is and know his credentials. Guess maybe the city should come forward with a complete and honest explanation as to what is going on. Anyone think that might happen??? We also got a comment in the We Get Letters page. These people saw loaded trucks going from the MURF site heading north on West St. and coming back empty??? Where is this potentially contaminated soil being dumped??? Does the MOE know or approve of this??? Anyone else have some observations on this??? Would the city care to comment???

"What a Cock & Bull Story"

Jan. 17, 2005

Well we have heard it all now. As I wrote in the story below (Jan. 14) some odd things are happening down at the MURF site. At the end of December the city announced that the site work on the foot print of the building was finished. This work involved digging out the foot print about a meter and a half and then refilling the hole with about five meters of fill. This process was done to compress (surcharge) the ground below making it hard enough to build on. Once the dirt was in place it was to be left for five months so the compression could take place. We were shocked when in the first week of January the equipment started up and the freshly filled dirt at the south end of the footprint was dug up. Now one has to wonder why this dirt was being removed just a week after they announced the work was done. I suggested maybe some one had lost a watch but today we were told their reason.

According to Lori Koughan project manager the dirt had to be removed because it was frozen???? Gosh who would have thought that in a Canadian winter dirt would freeze??? But it seems that only the south end of the footprint froze??? This explanation like all others does not make sense. Why does it matter if the dirt freezes?? Didn't the "experts" know that dirt would freeze in January???? Won't the new dirt that replaced the old new dirt freeze as well??? Something else that is odd and worries us. It seems the crew setup night lights again so they can work after dark. Why would they have to work after dark??? There is no emergency just replacing frozen dirt is there (maybe they worried it would melt)??? And what about the huge roll of plastic sheeting that I spotted???? What are they using that for???

We checked with an experienced engineer who is very familiar with the site and repeated the Cock and Bull story to him. In his opinion Lori's story does not add up either. As he explained all dirt freezes at this time of year and whether frozen or not makes absolutely no difference to the surcharge process. As he said "it wouldn't matter what material you put there as long as it was heavy enough to do the job". You could put old tires, clay, rocks, ice cubes just about anything as long as it was heavy enough to compress. It also makes no sense to our engineer that only the south end was being removed and refilled as he insisted most likely all the dirt is frozen. Seems there is no engineering reason for that either. When I broached the question "what if maybe the plume of toxic material has started to move south and they were now trying to stop this migration would their actions make some sense"? He concurred that scenario made far more sense than the Cock & Bull story.

So where does this leave us. If the plume which had been stable all these years is indeed now moving due to the activity (they were warned this may happen) we maybe in far more trouble than Lori or the city would care for us to know. You see Dr. Ford stated that natural movement of this plume would be to the south, southeast. We need to have the recent results of the monitoring wells which would or would not show this migration. As our engineer friend said "you don't need an engineering degree to figure this one out, common sense will do just fine". The minister of the environment and the MOE must act and act quickly. They must sample the monitoring wells themselves and do it immediately. The time of trust must come to an end now. If this plume is moving our estimate of \$50,000,000 cleanup of the site could actually increase ten fold if indeed it can ever be cleaned up once widely spread. As the plume moves it will contaminate other property, the water table, basements (rendering homes and business unusable) etc. I know the city will say we are fearmongering. But hey! their story does not add up. The only theory that does make sense is our scenario at this point. So if the ministry and the city wants to clear the air then release the latest monitoring well results or come up with a better story. By the way Lori Koughan also claims that this new activity is on going work of the original contract. That again left our engineer friend scratching his head????

jim tolnai

What's Going On

Jan 14, 2005

For the last 10 or so days there has been a behive of activity at the MURF site. At the end of the year the footprint of the building was finished being filled and it looked like the job was finished. The dirt was to stay put for the next five months compressing the site. About ten days ago the machinery was fired up again and they started to excavate a large section of the dirt. From the look of it about 20% of the southside was dug up and piled high (see pictures below). The frozen earth

came out in big clumps. Then a roadbed was made and trucks started to roll in with fill to replace the freshly excavated dirt. I tried to think why this was happening. The original contract called for excavation and filling. There was nothing in the tender document about re-excavating and filling again.

So what is going on? Did someone lose their watch and was trying to find it? What on earth would make these people move a mountain of earth and then not even refilling the hole with it but bring new fill in. Considering the controversy about the site and the Mayor complaining about money being wasted on legal fees why are they doing this? As everyone should know by now there is a large plume of toxic vinyl chloride and trichlorethylene directly under this dirt. Dr. Ford had stated that the natural flow was to the south east and it was the south end that was excavated again. With the construction activity and the sheer weight that was forced onto this plume could they have started the plume to move. Did their monitoring wells start showing this? Did they in desperation to try and stop this migration dig this trench in the hopes of stopping it. Is the dirt that was dug up now contaminated and could not be used to refill the trench? Something is definately not right here. Today the trucks were still rolling in and dumping fill. One machine was on top of the pile spreading dirt that a loader was moving from the excavated pile to the top. The machine was spreading this dirt as if it were agitating or aerating it. If you have VOC contaminated dirt by mixing and aerating it some of the VOC's will evaporate. How about some answers Mayor and council. What is going on?

Secret Contracts????/Arrogance

Jan. 13, 2005

Seems it's business as usual down at City Hall. As everyone knows we have been nickel and dime by city management. Doesn't seem to matter what documents or questions we ask, managements standard line is apply through the Freedom of Information. Now we understand the FOI legislation was enacted so that people could get information that the government claims is not public. We understand that some information is or should be kept confidential but what Orillia council and management are doing is not only wrong but more than likely illegal under the legislation. The FOI is not there to be abused by Orillia council and management. Here is a case in point. Read the question we asked and then the answers we received from Lori Koughan.

Question

Can I look at and or be given a copy of the contracts signed by the City of Orillia with S&P consultants. How many contracts were signed?

Can you provide me a copy of the Site Specific Risk Assessment Pre-submission Form submitted to the Ministry on December 24, 2004.

Answer

#3 You will have to put in a Freedom of Information request for the contracts with Shaheen & Peaker and the Pre Submission Form as the FOI Co-ordinator will have to assess whether they are public documents.

So it seems that a contract entered into by Orillia and Shaheen & Peaker is not a public document according to Lori Koughan. Now folks how can a contract for services or product paid for from taxes not be automatically deemed a public document. Our question was courteous, straight forward and precise. But it seems city management does not think you have a right to this information without a fight. The only conclusion we can draw from this is that like the secret confidentiality agreement that Ian Brown claims they had with Molson also applies to the contract with Shaheen and Peaker. We are not to be told what they were hired to do or how much it costs. Doesn't that strike you as illegal. Public money paid out on a secret contract for a secret amount? Sure sounds like the shenanigans going on in Ottawa with the advertising scandals. How many other secret contracts has this council and city management given and are hiding from public scrutiny?

As for the Pre Submission for the Site Specific Risk Assessment according to Lori that too is confidential. Now how on earth can the public determine what the risks are if they won't allow us to see it. This again reminds us of how Ian Brown and council withheld the Molson environmental report for 22 months claiming a secret agreement that never was (Brown has still not been censured by council for that mis speak). Does the city have a confidentiality agreement with Shaheen & Peaker to not disclose this report paid for by tax dollars in a secret contract for a secret amount.

Q. Can we have a copy of the confidentiality agreement which makes these documents confidential?

It's obvious we need a new broom at city hall to sweep the arrogance of these people right out the door.

Jan. 12, 2005

More Bad News

Here it is 4:30 am and I am unable to sleep. Last night's show on TVO was a high but that is not why I can't sleep. You see as our group came together to watch Studio 2 I had arranged for a guest to come and talk to us about the MURF site. I had already spoken with Tom Egan and his information blew me away. I have many people approach me but very few will allow their name to be used and I have had no one willing to share their information with our group. This puts me at a great disadvantage to getting information out to you. We end up having to find other sources which in the closed culture of old Orillia is tough. So I was tickled pink when Tom showed up and shared a lifetime of information his father had shared with him. You see Tom's dad worked for 33 years at Otaco and was distressed by the factory practice of waste disposal. He worked in just about every

department and shared with his family his great concern for future generations that would be put at risk because of what went on. This man who was a loyal long term employee and died from job related illness could never challenge these practices at the time as he had a family to feed. But today fate has brought his son to share this information with us and literally speaks from the grave. He finally is able to share his fears and concerns.

Otaco was a formidable manufacturing concern. At it's height of power as many as eight hundred people worked there. They produced everything from toys, airplane parts, furnaces, casting and more. These activities required the use of massive amounts of different chemicals, solvents and heavy metals. Once used these solvents and chemicals were contaminated and had to be disposed of. Management struggled with how to dispose of these nuisances cost effectively. A plan was implemented that would make the property if not the most polluted in the world then a close second. Drains were installed in every department in the plant. These drains were then hooked up to pipes which lead out to the property. Using used railroad ties holes ten by ten by twelve feet deep were dug and cribbed with these creosote drenched ties. Then pipes from the plant were run into these cribs. For the next two to three years thousand of gallons of toxic soup was poured down drains and out to these pits. Once the pits were full of sludge they were covered over and new cribs were built with the piping dug up and moved to them. This practice continued well into the 1970's. Tom was able to show us locations for two cribs that he personally saw but assured us that the property is littered with them. Now this information ties into information that I received from another source who claimed toxins were dumped down drains. Tom has now corroborated this story. According to Tom the piping used was purchased from Fahralloy which was located on Barrie Rd.

So what does this mean? Well it means that this site is far worse than we originally thought. You see we thought that dumping although terrible was not necessarily systematic and was done sporadically. Now it seems the property has been saturated on an ongoing basis and for years. As we watched the show later in the evening we witnessed workers in a freshly dug hole inspecting a couple of pipes they had found. The pipes appeared to be of alloy in nature giving more credibility to this story that pipes used were manufactured by Fahralloy. This story just keeps getting worse. We now need some help from you. If you worked at the site or have second hand information from family members or friends please come forward and tell your story. We need to identify as many sites on the property as possible so that we can force council and their experts to do a proper study as well as force the MOE to start acting like an authority which protects the public and environment. If you stay silent the consequences for the health of our community if not already will be jeopardized. So please no one will hold you responsible if you worked there, in fact you will be held as heroes. We know that many workers have paid with their lives but two wrongs don't make a right. So please come forward, don't let another generation suffer the way you or your family has suffered.

We also need your financial support as mayor and council will have to be forced to do the right thing. Yesterday we received our first out of province donation. This young lady from Banff Alberta heard about our efforts, checked the Speaking Out web-site and decided to help. So come on Orillia get involved and help protect the community. The alternative is not going to be pretty. Tom shared many more facts which we will share with you in the coming days so check www.speakingout.biz often for updates.

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